

Prescribed Fire Information 2013



Deschutes County Central Oregon Fire Management Service (COFMS)

Deschutes National Forest
(541) 383 - 5300
Ochoco National Forest
(541) 416 - 6500
Crooked River National Grassland
(541) 475 - 9272
Prineville Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
(541) 416 - 6700

To Report a Wildfire, Call 9-1-1

2013 Prescribed Fire Program

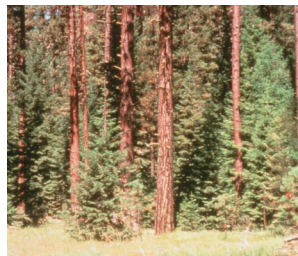
Many forests in Central Oregon are in an unhealthy condition. More than a century of fire suppression has led to crowded, dense forests that are dead or dying, and highly vulnerable to attacks by insects and disease. These dense stands also represent a potential threat of wildfire to the homes that border the forests.

The desired future for the forests is to restore thousands of acres to conditions that are compatible with frequent, low- to moderate- intensity wildfires. We accomplish this by thinning dense stands and reintroducing fire where appropriate.

Prescribed fire is one tool used by fire managers and forest ecologists to reduce hazardous fuels, improve forest health and protect the quality of our watersheds and wildlife habitat.



Historical Photo showing natural spacing in a ponderosa pine stand experiencing fire every 10-25 years (1909, above). Much of the current forest is dense, unhealthy, and at-risk to high-intensity wildfire (right).



Prescribed fires are ignited under precise weather conditions to meet specific resource objectives. Specialists ignite prescribed fires using various ignition patterns when weather conditions are conducive to producing fire behavior that meets these objectives while at the same time protecting water, wildlife habitat, soil, or other resources of concern. Specialists may spend years planning a prescribed fire and work very closely with wildlife biologists, foresters, hydrologists, and other resource managers to ensure the fire meets resource needs.



Various ignition patterns allow managers to regulate fire behavior and reduce hazardous fuels.

Prescribed fires are ignited when predicted weather patterns and fuel conditions will minimize smoke impacts to air quality and public health. Specialists follow policies outlined in the Oregon Department of Forestry smoke management plan, which governs prescribed fires and attempts to minimize impacts to visibility and public health. Once ignited, units are monitored and patrolled until they are declared out.



Wildfires, such as Davis (2003, above) and Skeleton (1996, below) can impact the lives, property and lifestyles of people living or recreating in Central Oregon. Hazardous fuels coupled with typical summer weather can create conditions that lead to increased fire danger. Prescribed fire is one tool used to reduce fuel loadings and potential impacts to communities from wildfire.



For more information on fire related happenings in Central Oregon, go to:
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/centraloregon/fire/>

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